<u>REMARKS</u>

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated

August 26, 2004. Claims 1, 2, 4-12, 14-22, and 24-29 are now pending in this application.

Claims 1, 7, 11, 17, 21, 24, 27, and 28 have been amended to define still more clearly what

Applicants regard as their invention. Claims 1, 7, 11, 17, 21, 27, and 28 are independent.

Favorable reconsideration is requested.

First, Applicants gratefully acknowledge the allowance of Claims 7, 17, and

27. The changes made to these claims are not deemed to affect their allowability.

The Office Action rejected Claims 1, 2, 4-6, 8-12, 14-16, 18-22, 24-26, and

28 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Japanese Laid-Open Patent

Application No. 11266161A (Andrew) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,459,816 (Matsuura et

al.).

Applicants submit that independent Claims 1, 11, 21, and 28, together with

the remaining claims dependent therefrom, are patentably distinct from the proposed

combination of the cited prior art at least for the following reasons.

Claim 1 is directed to an image processing apparatus for receiving and

decoding a code sequence obtained by encoding an image. The apparatus includes

decoding means, correction value selection means, dequantizing means, and inverse

transforming means. The decoding means entropy-decodes the input code sequence to

obtain quantization indices. The correction value selection means selects a correction

value from among a plurality of correction values that each have different absolute values

from each other, used to correct the quantization indices obtained by the decoding means.

The dequantizing means corrects the quantization indices, by adding or subtracting the

selected correction value to or from values of the quantization indices and generates a

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series of coefficient sequences by computing products of the corrected quantization indices and a quantization step. The inverse transforming means restores an image signal by executing predetermined inverse transform manipulation of the generated coefficient sequences.

Among other notable features of Claim 1 are (1) selecting a correction value from among a plurality of correction values that each have different values from each other (see, e.g., Figs. 10A and 10B of Applicant's disclosure), and (2) correcting the quantization indices by adding the selected correction value to values of the quantization indices, or by subtracting the selected correction value from values of the quantization indices. The adding and subtracting are described in the present specification, at least at page 15, lines 3-16, in equations (7)-(9).[1]

Andrew relates to a method of compressing digital data. The Office Action, at page 4, states that "Andrew discloses... correction value selection means (page 46 inverse quantization equation) for selecting correction values among plurality of correction values". Andrew discusses selecting whether a correction value r (=0.5) is added or subtracted to or from a quantization index in the inverse quantization. However, while Andrew discusses one correction value r (=0.5), Andrew does not teach or suggest a plurality of correction values, each having different values from each other, as recited in Claim 1.

Matsuura et al., as understood by Applicants, relates to an image processing system for compressing image data including binary image data and continuous tone image

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[1]It is of course to be understood that the references to various portions of the present application are by way of illustration and example only, and that the claims are not limited by the details shown in the portions referred to.

data, but is not seen to teach or suggest selecting a correction value from among a plurality of correction values each having different values from each other, and correcting the quantization indices by adding such correction value to values of the quantization indices, or by subtracting the selected correction value from values of the quantization indices.

Nothing in Andrew or Matsuura et al., either separately or in any permissible combination (if any), teaches or suggests selecting a correction value from among a plurality of correction values each having different values from each other, and correcting the quantization indices by adding or subtracting the selected correction value to or from values of the quantization indices, as recited in Claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that Claim 1 is clearly allowable over Andrew and Matsuura et al., either separately or in any permissible combination (if any).
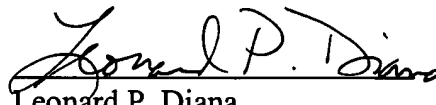
Independent Claims 11, 21, and 28 each include similar features to those discussed above in connection with Claim 1, and therefore are believed to be patentable for at least the same reasons as discussed above in connection with Claim 1.

The other not yet allowed claims in this application depend from one or another of the independent claims discussed above, and, therefore, are submitted to be patentable for at least the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, individual consideration or reconsideration, as the case may be, of the patentability of each claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and the allowance of the present application.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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